ASHES OF EMPIRE.

BY ROBERT W. CHAMBERS.



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ASHES OF EMPIRE.

Behind black ramparts where an angry sun
Buried in ashes, smoulders all the West,
Against a sky of fire I see the crest
Of battlements, deep-terraced, gun on gun.

A towered cathedral burns athwart the rays.
A mans of windows kindle in the blaze.
Chimney and dome and helfry, one by Redden to cinders through the crimson haze.

Gigantic shadows fall on roof and wall.

The crowd had become a mob. The empire was at an end.

A short, fleres howl broke from the crowd which filled the Rue de Rivoll from the Louvie to the Place de la Concorde, as an officer of the imperial guard appeared for a moment on the terrace above the Orangerie and attempted to speak. Go back! Go back! shouted the mob. "Down with the empire! Long live the republic. The empress has betrayed Paris! Shame!

For a second rage choked him. "What do you want of me, gentlemen?" he said, controlling his passion with an effort. "I have made a promise, and you will find that I will keep it. If General Trochu has deserted the empress, make the most of it. Let God deal with him. For me, I am here to stay. Say so to your mob."

At this moment a roar arose from the crowd outside. "The empress is gone! To the palace! To the palace! To the palace! The empress is gone!

driver and shock his fist. "Pig of a cabman," he whispered "drive slowly or III push you into the river."

Harewood was slighting as he closed the cab door and sprang to the other side of the horse. "Now, Bourke," he said, "touch up your jelu."

Bourke uttered another awful threat and signalled the cabby. The latter obeyed with a despairing grimace, and the horse moved off at a trot. Harewood plant and the horse head.

In a moment they were in the crowd that suprounded the gate of the horse's head.

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After a minute's restless contempla-tion of the signs and the open door, the Mouse sauntered over to the bird store, stouched up to the window, and pressed his insignificant nose against it. Little by little the dim interior of the bird store became vigible. He leisthe bird store became visible. He leisurly surveyed the rows of wire and wicker cages, drumming on the window glass with grimy fingers. A gray and scarlet parrot, dozing on a perch, woke up and turned a penetrating look

The Mouse flattened his face against

the world over

the world over
There was nobody in the outer shop, that was clear. There seemed to be nothing to steal there, either. The Mouse did not consider birds worth stealing. Still, nobody seemed to be about, and it was the instinct of the Mouse to rummage. He withdrew from the window, assured himself that the street was deserted, then slouched silently around to the open door and entered. As he set his worn shoe upon the

threshold the feathers on the parrot's neck flattened in alarm, the monkey crouched trembling in a corner of his cage, every little bird became mute and

more verturesome of the people with the faunt sitting the first of the formatic of the formati

He moved away, furtively brushing a tear from his cheek. Yoistic stepped across the threshold and touched his ranged elbow impulsively. He turned with a dramatic start, accepted

ragged elbow impulsively. He turned with a dramatic start, accepted the small silver coin, then stalked across the street, his head on his breast, his arms folded. Presently the stalk relapsed into a walk, then into a shuffle, then into a slouch. The sunshine lay warm on the grass-grown fortifications. Where it lay warmest the Mouse sat him down and crossed his legs.

When he had lighted his pipe he stretched out at full length, both arms behind his head, cap tilted to shade his single eye. Under the peak of the cap he could see the long, yellow road, stretching away into the country from the Porte Rouge. Out there somewhere—perhaps very far, perhaps very near—the Prussian armies were moving across France toward Paris. The thought amused the Mouse. He scratched one large car and speculated. With the Prussians would come bombardment, with bombardment would come panic, with panic might come anarchy, and with anarchy would come poillage.

The Mouse smacked his lips over the

on him.

The Mouse flattened his face against the window and thrust his tongue out at the parrot.

At first the bird paid little attention to this insuit, but as the Mouse persevered the parrot eyed him with increasing animesity.

Coco! Coco! Salaud! Tiens pout tot, vieux creth! sneared the Mouse persetapping on the window with his pipestem and distorting his mouth in decision, until the parrot chapped its wings and screamed, the feathers on its head creet with excitement and irritation. One by one the other birds, now also greatly agitated, joined in; the jack daw croaked and chattered, the finches, thrushes and canaries chorused a shrill treble. A young monitey in a corner set up an ear-piercing sariek and a red squirrel rushed madly around in his wire wheel.

The Mouse was amused. With snears and fibes and jeering gestures he excited the parrot; he made awful faces at the monkey, until the little creature clung to the cage wires, shivering and screaming; he frightened the smaller birds by waving his dirty fingers to and fro before the window frames. Presently, however, he tired of the sport; his restless eye roamed about the interior of the shop; he pressed his pittled face closer to the glass, with now and then a rapid sidelong glance peculiar to the chevalier of industry the world over.

There was nobody in the outer shop, that was about of the scale of palaces. The brutal guards had brought and free dother broaden to the sack of palaces. The brutal guards had hon Oncle demanded to be led to the sack of palaces. The brutal guards had hon oncle with their field butter the part of the scale of palaces. The brutal guards had house, he had gained nothing but an about of the scale from contact with a face of the sack of palaces. The brutal guards had brought from contact with a face of the sack of palaces. The brutal guards had brought from contact with a face of the sack of palaces. The brutal guards had brought from contact with a face of the sack of palaces. The brutal guards had brought from contact with a

intention of rummazing the Tulileriesand perhaps some houses of the stupid
citizens. In vain had Bibl la Goutte
bawled anarchy and treason; in vain
had Mon Oncle demanded to be led to
the sack of palaces. The brutal guards
had thumped Mon Oncle with their
rifle butts; the imperial police had
mauled Bibl la Goutte, and as for the
Mouse, he had gained nothing but an
abrasion of the scalp from contact with
an officer's sword hilt.

But now the Mouse truly hoped that,
with the advent of the victorious Prussian armies before the walls of Paris,
things might be different. When the
big shells began to sail over the Seine
and knock houses and churches into
kindling wood, the Mouse intended to
do a little exploring on his private account, and he acknowledged with enthusiasm that it would be a degenerate
knight of leisure who should fail to
amass a pretty competency.

So the Mouse lay musing and smoking in the warm September sun, one
eve half closed but still fixed upon the

down on the grass. Ribi regarded him in breathless admiration, his lean jaws working with admiration.

What a general he would make!" he whispered to Mon Oncle.

"Or what an assassin!" replied Mon Oncle aloud, mopping his fat face.

The Mouse felt the compliment, but said nothing. The drums beat continuously down by the gate, the dull cries it the off. Is called up to them, from the off re call up to them from below, mingled with the murmur of the

below, mingled with the murmur of the throng at the pont-levis.

Hibi, sitting on the grass, nodded drowsily in the hot sunshine. Mon Oncle stretched his short, bandy legs out under an acacla bush, and presently fell asleep. The Mouse, too, appeared to slumbed, except when a breeze moved the brim of his cap and a stray spot of sunlight glumered on the iris of his slightless eye.

(To be continued next Monday.

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is unsurpassed TROY STEAM LAUNDRY.

Yolette drew a small purse from her gown and looked at the Mouse with sincere eyes.

"Will you really give it to the public defense?" she asked. "Or—if you are hungry and need it for yourself."—

"Don't do it," murmured Hilde; "he is not hongst."

The Mouse's eyes filled with tears; his lips quivered.

"Honesty is often clothed in rags." he snivelled, drawing himself up. "I thank you for your courtesy. I will go.

He moved are to the man adything. "Cripple Creek, Colo., April 24.—Three men lost their lives in a fire today in the Londonde ry mine. On Iron Clad hill. The deat are: W. H. Pine, miner superintendent: J. W. Foster, miner; J. P. Jones, miner.

Jones and Foster were working in a drift at the bottom of the shaft, when the shafthouse took fire. Pine went to their rescue and the three were asphysiated. The bodies were recovered.

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L Drug Dept. Greeks Seeking Enlistment.

Athens, April 21.—Many Greeks are presenting themselves at the United States consulate here, seeking enlist-ment for the war against Spain. Spanish Red Cross.

Paris, April 24.-The Society for the Care of Wounded Soldiers has donated 20,000 francs and has opened a sub-scription for the purpose of useisting the Spanish Red Cross society.

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